WE CLAIM:

1.   A method performed by a provider of a computer file to trigger updating of
5   said computer file used by a computer, said method comprising the steps of:

      (i)   providing an updated version of said computer file at a location from
which it may be downloaded by said computer;

      (ii)   sending a tag indicative of availability of said updated computer file to
said computer.

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2.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said tag is part of an e-mail message.

3.   A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said tag is part of an e-mail message
header.

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4.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said computer is connected to said
location via an internet link.

5.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein computer file is computer virus
20   definition data.

6.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said computer file is an anti-virus
computer program file.

25   7.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said tag includes data indicative of a
version level of said computer file.

8.   A method as claimed in claim 1, comprising maintaining a database of
computers to which said tag is to be sent when an updated version of said computer
30   file is made available.

9.   A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said database includes priority data
indicating a priority level associated with an address, said priority level being used to

control how rapidly after said updated version of said computer file is made available said tag is sent to said computer.

10.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein sending of said tag upon availability

5   of an updated version of said computer file is provided as a subscription service by said provider.

11.   A computer program product for use by a provider of a computer file to trigger

10   updating of said computer file used by a computer said provider having provided an updated version of said computer file at a location from which it may be downloaded by said computer, said computer program product comprising:

        (i)   tag sending code operable to send a tag indicative of availability of said updated computer file to said computer.

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12.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 11, wherein said tag is part of an e-mail message.

13.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 12, wherein said tag is part

20   of an e-mail message header.

14.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 11, wherein said computer is connected to said location via an internet link.

25   15.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 11, wherein computer file is computer virus definition data.

16.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 11, wherein said computer file is an anti-virus computer program file.

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17.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 11, wherein said tag includes data indicative of a version level of said computer file.

18.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 11, comprising database code operable to maintain a database of computers to which said tag is to be sent when an updated version of said computer file is made available.

5   19.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 18, wherein said database includes priority data indicating a priority level associated with an address, said priority level being used to control how rapidly after said updated version of said computer file is made available said tag is sent to said computer.

10   20.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 11, wherein sending of said tag upon availability of an updated version of said computer file is provided as a subscription service by said provider.

21.   Apparatus for use by a provider of a computer file to trigger updating of said
15   computer file used by a computer said provider having provided an updated version of said computer file at a location from which it may be downloaded by said computer, said apparatus comprising:

        (i)   a tag sender operable to send a tag indicative of availability of said updated computer file to said computer.

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22.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein said tag is part of an e-mail message.

23.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said tag is part of an e-mail
25   message header.

24.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein said computer is connected to said location via an internet link.

30   25.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein computer file is computer virus definition data.

26.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein said computer file is an anti-virus computer program file.

27.　Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein said tag includes data indicative of a version level of said computer file.

5　28.　Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, comprising database logic operable to maintain a database of computers to which said tag is to be sent when an updated version of said computer file is made available.

29.　Apparatus as claimed in claim 28, wherein said database includes priority data
10　indicating a priority level associated with an address, said priority level being used to control how rapidly after said updated version of said computer file is made available said tag is sent to said computer.

30.　Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein sending of said tag upon
15　availability of an updated version of said computer file is provided as a subscription service by said provider.